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**STEPHEN
KING**

**PETER
STRAUB**

THE

TALISMAN

A black and white illustration of a muscular man with large, feathered wings running through a cloudy sky. He is looking upwards and to the right. Several other winged figures are visible in the background, some flying and some appearing to be in a state of distress or falling. The overall tone is dramatic and epic.

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THE ROAD OF TRIALS

THE TALISMAN

THE ROAD OF TRIALS

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We want to know what you think about *The Talisman*.
Please email us at delreycomics@randomhouse.com.

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THE TALISMAN: THE ROAD OF TRIALS No. 5, March 2010

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Jack Sawyer has embarked on an epic quest: to locate the enchanted, all-powerful Talisman and prevent it from falling into the hands of the man who murdered his father and now schemes to see his mother dead as well. His search takes him back and forth between two parallel worlds: ours and the strange fantasy plane known as the Territories.

Imperiled at every turn in the road—by mysterious trees whose roots threaten to entwine him, by a goatlike horror called the Elroy-thing, and by other, more shadowy demons—Jack has thus far relied on his wits to elude capture and keep his quest alive. But the heat's about to get turned up in a major way, as the malevolent Morgan of Orris closes in on the one person who stands between himself and ultimate dominion over his own world—and possibly ours as well.

Ostley Inn
Outpost Road
The Territories

I THINK
I'M SAFE...

The Ostley Tap
Our World

AT LEAST
FOR NOW...

GRRRR! HE
FLIPPED INTO THE
TERRITORIES!





HEY, YOU
TRAVELLIN' IN
THE DAYDREAMS
AGAIN, TRAVELLIN'
JACK?

I WAS SIX...
IT WAS CALIFORNIA...
AND MY DADDY WAS
ALIVE...



THAT'S A
GOOD RECORD,
PHIL. WHO'S
PLAYING THE
SAX?

VROOM!

DEXTER
GORDON.

I'LL ALWAYS BE
GRATEFUL TO YOU
FOR SHOWING ME
HOW TO FLIP INTO
THE TERRORIES,
PHIL.

YOU
LEARN
FAST.

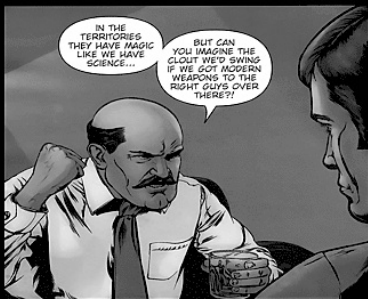
The offices of
Sammy & Sloat
Beverly Hills,
California
1975

YOU KNOW,
I THINK WE COULD
GET OURSELVES IN A
REALLY SYNERGISTIC
SITUATION OVER
THERE.

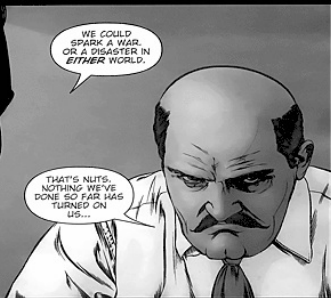
ALL WE
HAVE TO DO IS
INCREASE OUR
INVOLVEMENT.

IN THE
TERRITORIES
THEY HAVE MAGIC
LIKE WE HAVE
SCIENCE...

BUT CAN
YOU IMAGINE THE
CLOUT WE'D SWING
IF WE GOT MODERN
WEAPONS TO THE
RIGHT GUYS OVER
THERE?!



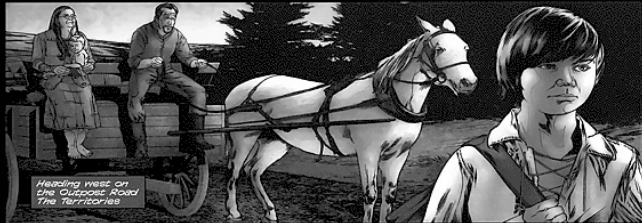
SAWYER AND SLOAT TALENT AGENCY





...UNLESS YOU
MEAN BLEDSOE.

YES, MORGAN.
THAT'S EXACTLY
WHAT I MEAN.





JUMP DOWN,
LADDIE. MARKET'S
OVER THE NEXT
RISE. YOU SEEM
LIKE A NICE
BOY...



...BUT SIMPLE
FOLK LIKE US GET HURT
WHEN THEY MEDDLE IN THE
AFFAIRS OF THE GREAT.

THE QUEEN IS
DYING, AND HER
NEW MINISTER IS A
DANGEROUS MAN.



ALL THOSE WHO DEFY HIM
ARE BEATEN, OR HAVE
THEIR FARMS BURNED
DOWN, OR WORSE.



BUT MY
FATHER...

HE WORKED
AT THE PALACE
AND NOW HE'S
DEAD AND HIS SON
IS SLEEPING
ROUGH.

THAT
TELLS ME
ALL I NEED TO
KNOW.



Market Town
The Outpost Road
The Territories



FINE MEATS!
FINE MEATS!



IT'S
QUEEN
LAURA!



NO!
IT'S MY
MOTHER!

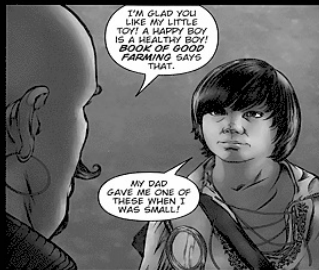
WHAT AM
I DOING HERE IN
THE TERRITORIES
CHASING AFTER SOME
TALISMAN THAT
MIGHT NOT EVEN
BE REAL?

MY
MOTHER IS
DYING...



WHY SO
SAD, MY LITTLE
LAD?

HUH?







IT'S
BEAUTIFUL!





**Angola
New York**



~YARK~

**Angola
New York**



ANGOLA?
I'VE MADE IT TO
LAKE ERIE. IF I'M
LUCKY I'LL CATCH
A RIDE ALL THE
WAY TO OHIO.



HEY KID,
DID YOU HEAR
WHAT HAPPENED
BACK IN ANGOLA A
COUPLE OF HOURS
AGO?

THEY HAD AN
EARTHQUAKE...



Freak Earthquake Kills Five Workers



Work on the Rainbird Towers was tragically halted yesterday as an unprecedented earth tremor collapsed the structure of the building, burying many construction workers beneath the rubble.

Staff Photographer • Lauren Butler



THAT
EARTHQUAKE WAS
MY FAULT...

BUCKEYE MALL



MY DAD
TOLD UNCLE MORGAN
THAT IT WAS DANGEROUS
TO CHANGE THINGS IN THE
TERRITORIES...

BUT ALL I
DID WAS BURY AN
APPLE CORE...



SOMETHING
REALLY
STINKS!

I WANT
MY MOM.



THIS IS A COLLECT CALL
FOR MRS. SAWYER IN
FOUR-OM-SEVEN AND
FOUR-OM-EIGHT.
FROM JACK.



Phone



MOM!

JACKY!
WHERE ARE
YOU?

I'M IN OHIO.
I'M ON MY WAY TO
SEE RICHARD.

MOM,
ARE YOU
OK?

I'M GREAT.
WELL, NOT ANY
MORE.

IS UNCLE
MORGAN
BOtherING
YOU?

I GOT RID
OF THE STOUT TWO
DAYS AFTER YOU
LEFT, BABY.



ERRREEEYK

JACK?
JACKY, ARE YOU
STILL THERE?



MOM?
MOM!



HELLO,
JACK.



UNCLE
MORGAN?

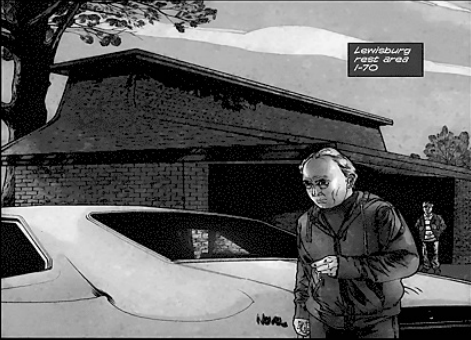
GET YOUR
ASS BACK TO
NEW HAMPSHIRE,
JACK.

WAIT!

YOU'RE A
MURDERER NOW.
GET YOURSELF BACK
OR WE'LL BRING
YOU BACK IN A
BODY BAG.







Lewisburg
rest area
I-70



THAT WAS
ONE CREEPY
DRIVER. MAYBE
THERE'S SOMEBODY
ELSE HERE WHO
CAN GIVE ME
A LIFT.



OH MY
GOD. IT'S UNCLE
MORGAN.

MISSOURI
MLS



I GOTTA
GET OUT OF HERE.
FAST.





I'M IN THE
TERRITORIES!



WHAT
THE...?

HEY!
HEY! GET
AWAY FROM 'IM!
RIGHT HERE
AND NOW!

GOD'S NAILS!
GET AWAY FROM 'IM
FORE I BITE YOUR
GOD-POUNDING
EYES OUT!





OHMYGOD!
IT'S ELROY...



YOU'RE
NOT ELROY.

I'M
WOLF!



WOLF! SHAKIN'
HANDS RIGHT HERE
AND NOW!

ARE YOU...
SORT OF A
WEREWOLF?

SURE AM!
YOU POUNDED
THAT NAIL!



I'M JACK
SAW~

SAWYER!
HOW'S YOUR
FATHER, JACK?
HOW'S OLD PHIL
THESE DAYS?
WOLF!

TO BE CONTINUED

Jack has just met a companion whose life will become intertwined with his, in both the Territories and our own world. But Jack is still thousands of miles from achieving his goal—the Talisman that can save his mother's life.

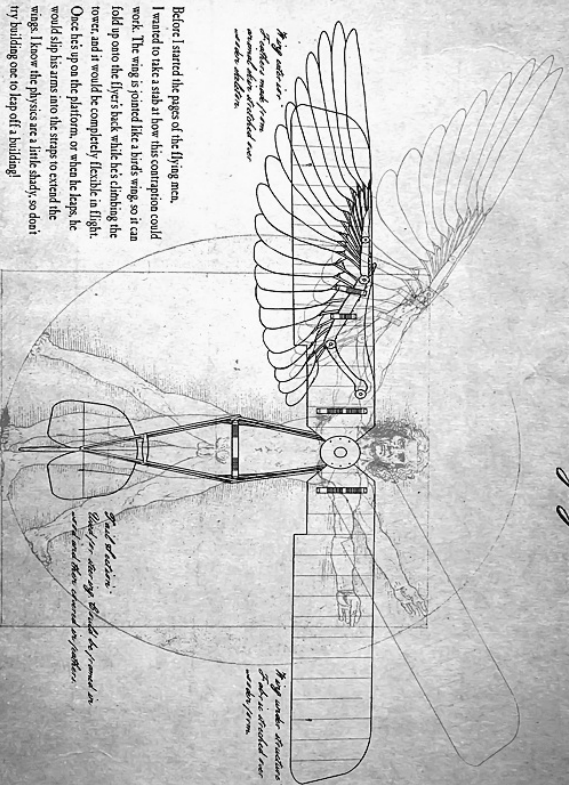


Jack's adventures will continue in the second story arc:

The Talisman: A Collision of Worlds

Watch for Issue 1 on sale Summer 2010

William F. Guy's Men



Before I started the pages of the flying men, I wanted to take a stab at how this contraption could work. The wing is jointed like a bird's wing so it can fold up onto the flyer's back while he's climbing the tower, and it would be completely flexible in flight. Once he's up on the platform, or when he leaps, he would slip his arms into the straps to extend the wings. I know the physics are a little shady, so don't try building one to keep off a building!

PAINTING A GHOST: THE ESSENCE OF PHILIP SAWYER

From the moment we began working on this graphic-novel adaptation of *The Talisman*, the question of Philip Sawyer haunted us. Although Jack Sawyer's father plays a large role in our comics, he is never actually seen in the novel. By the time *The Talisman* begins, he has been in the grave for six years and is little more than one of Jack's vague memories. Phil is frequently *remembered* by other characters, but these recollections are rarely vivid, and they usually tell us more about the person who is doing the recollecting than about Phil himself.

Philip Sawyer, as we have presented him, began with the visual interpretation. In their notes for our comic adaptation, Peter Straub and Stephen King maintained that they didn't want Philip Sawyer to look like a generic comic-book "guy." They didn't want his jaw to be too square or his expression too cheerful. In other words, they didn't want us to fall for Phil's Hollywood-agent persona. According to Stephen King's comments, Phil Sawyer should appear sinister, not just cardboard-cutout handsome.

Since I had always assumed that Phil Sawyer was the archetypal good guy, the authors' comments gave me pause. If Phil Sawyer—who loved his wife, loved his child, and wanted what was best for the Territories—could be sinister, then I had missed something in the makeup of his character.

My first research task was to track down whatever clues I could find regarding Philip Sawyer's face and physique. Early on in the novel, our young hero walks into the Arcadia Tea and Jam Shoppe to find his mother. As he enters, Lily is struck by how much Jack resembles his father:

Jack gently opened the door, but still he set off the tinkle of the bell that he had known was above it....His mother stared at him with what looked like genuine surprise, and then gave him an open smile.

"Well, Wandering Jack, you're so tall that you looked just like your father when you came through that door," she said. "Sometimes I forget you're only twelve."

From other descriptions, we know that Jack is a handsome boy and that he has either light brown or dark blond hair. Hence I initially assumed that Phil must have fit this description as well. But Lily never tells us exactly *why* Jack looks like his father. Does he really have the same hair color? The same height? Or is it just that Jack's stance is the same as his father's, and with the light behind him, he appears to have the same silhouette? I *assumed* that Phil was tall, since height is mentioned in this passage, but what Lily is actually saying is that Jack is beginning to gain his father's adult height. It was safe to assume that father and son look very similar,

but which features were the same and which were different is difficult to say. Phil was probably fairly tall with light hair, but as we learn in other parts of the novel, Jack's blue eyes come from Lily, not Phil.

The second place I looked for information was in the memories of Morgan Sloat. Through Morgan Sloat's angry reminiscences about his former business partner, we learn that the young Phil Sawyer was everything that the young Morgan was *not*. Morgan was overweight, ungainly, badly dressed, poor, and provincial, while Phil and the other Yale boys were slim, handsome, and rich-looking. But even these descriptions are inexact, since they come mainly from inference and association, and how we picture some of the descriptors we are given depends a lot upon our own free association. Just as I imagined that Phil looked like an older version of Jack, I made assumptions about Phil based on Morgan's appearance. Morgan is balding with a moustache, so I assumed that Phil had a full head of hair and was clean shaven. But what exactly did Morgan mean when he said that Phil was "rich-looking"? In my mind's eye, I saw a young man with a straight and confident stance, square shoulders, good skin, hair, and nails, and well-made clothes. His manners were relaxed and easy because he hadn't been brutalized by the world. But Phil wasn't born to wealth. What made him seem rich to the young and inexperienced Morgan Sloat probably had more to do with Phil's innate regality—a trait that won him the heart of a queen in the Territories.

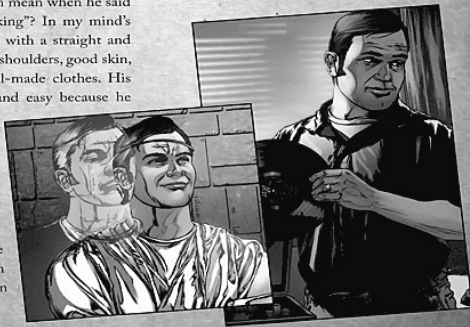
The final place in which I sought information about Phil's appearance was a passage illustrated in this issue of *The Talisman* where six-year-old Jacky is playing behind the sofa in his father's office and listening to the adults discuss the Daydreams, which is young Jack's term for the Territories:

"Let me just get some things straight," Uncle Morgan said, and Jacky saw the word straight as a pair of lines knotting around each other like snakes. "They have magic like we have physics, right? We're talking about an agrarian monarchy, using magic instead of science."

"Sure," Philip Sawyer said....

Then Uncle Morgan's voice tightened, and the excitement he tried to conceal cracked little whips within his consonants. "...Forget about the political stuff. Suppose we think about us for a change."

Jacky could feel his father's silence.



Even in this scene, in which we learn a lot about Phil's personality and his feelings about the Territories, Phil is a voice rather than a face. In fact, we learn more about the color and weight of Jack's toy taxi than we do about Phil's appearance!

The novel does, however, yield quite a bit of relevant data about Phil's personal history—and about the sinister side of his otherwise upstanding nature.

We know that Phil attended Yale as an undergraduate. Since he didn't come from a wealthy background, and hence wouldn't have gone to private school like the other boys, he made it to that exclusive university on his own initiative, which means he was probably both extremely clever and a very hard worker. Since he loved theater, we know he had an artistic temperament. Yet the fact that he chose to be an agent rather than an actor indicates that he preferred to be the man behind the scenes rather than the person in the spotlight. His success as an agent tells us that he was both diplomatic and detail-oriented, and that he wasn't easily fooled by others. Hence, although he might have appeared open when he wanted to be, there was something closed and secretive about Phil.

Phil's two best friends—Tom Woodbine and Morgan Sloat—also show Phil to be an unusual individual. Although Tom and Morgan were polar opposites, they had something in common: They were both

outsiders. Even in college, Tom's secret homosexuality must have set him apart from his classmates, while Morgan's awkwardness and internal rage meant he would neither fit in nor be particularly liked by others. Although Phil's son, Jack, called both men "uncle," Tom and Morgan were temperamental opposites. And ultimately it is this opposition that tells us more about Phil Sawyer's secret self than almost anything else.

The part of Philip Sawyer that was good-hearted, honest, and idealistic was drawn to Tom Woodbine. But another part of Phil was drawn to Morgan Sloat. It's hard to imagine that anybody would like Sloat, but Phil not only befriended him but traveled to California with him in order to set up a business. Through his friendship with Sloat, Phil exposes a darker side of his secret self. Although Sloat tells us that Phil "had never played to win" and though "he'd been encumbered by sentimental notions of loyalty and honor," Phil *knew* that Morgan was a less-than-reputable character and yet he still became his business partner. Even Morgan admits that Phil "thought of him as a sort of trained rattlesnake to be let out of his cage only



under controlled circumstances." So we have to ask ourselves why Phil thought he needed such a monster to work with him, either in our world or in the Territories?

In the novel we're often told that Phil was honest, and yet even his son knew that Phil kept secrets from his nearest and dearest. As Jack says, "My father...was never too bad at explaining things, especially the stuff that really couldn't be explained. He was very good at that. That's part of the reason he was such a good agent." Phil must have been extremely practiced in obfuscation and double-talk. In fact, Phil had a whole secondary existence in the Territories, yet he never told his wife about that other world! Not only was Philip Sawyer secretive, he was also extremely willful. For example, when Jack tells his mother that he is going to visit the Territories whether she gives him her blessing or not, Lily replies that he is "Phil Sawyer's son, all right."

Unlike Sloat, who wanted to mine a fortune from the Territories, Phil wanted to go there to experience and to learn. Yet if Phil's primary aim was to keep the Territories safe, why did he introduce snakelike Morgan

to that particular Garden of Eden? Was introducing Sloat simply a misjudgment on Phil's part, or did he have some other reason known only to himself? Phil never told Tom Woodbine about the Territories, though Tom was a much more humane human being.

So, where does all of this information leave us? It tells us that Philip Sawyer was a man of profound contradictions: that he was, in reality, two men. The outer Phil was pragmatic, honest, and a good businessman, but there was also an inner Phil. This *other* Philip Sawyer was an interdimensional traveler, a bit of a conjuror, a secretive individual determined to live on his own terms and to do as he saw fit, even if his decisions led to a great fall. Phil's Territories Twinner was a "fine man" and so was Phil, but—like a politician—Phil often decided that truth was relative and that he had the right to alter it as circumstances demanded. In that other world of the Territories he was the husband of a queen and an outstanding politician. Hence, just as the young Sawyer family lived on a fault line in California, Phil Sawyer lived on a fault line between worlds—a fault line that extended into the man himself.

All the best, *Robin Furth*



THE TALISMAN

COLLISION OF WORLDS

ISSUE 1 ON SALE SUMMER 2010.



"A classic . . . rare and dazzling."

—New York *Daily News*, on the #1 New York Times bestseller *The Talisman*



If Jack Sawyer thinks his troubles are over, he's in for a rude awakening.

Escaping the grasp of the Elroy-thing, Jack left that hooved monstrosity snarling and clutching at air. But back inside the Territories, his problems are just beginning. Morgan of Orris will stop at nothing to get his hands on Jack in order to seize control of the Territories from the dying Queen. And this time Morgan isn't leaving the job to his subordinates. Forced to take to the roads again, Jack finds that friends are in short supply and that the dangers surrounding him are legion. Where two worlds are so closely intertwined, even his most innocent actions can have catastrophic consequences, and the aftershocks could be fatal—for him and for his quest to find the Talisman.



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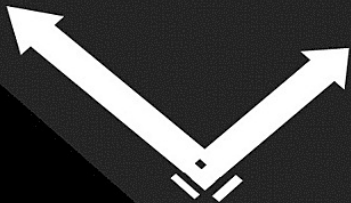
Tony Shasteen and JD Mettler

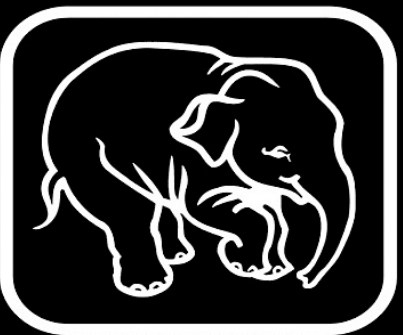
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